

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 IO-10 SAB-01

SCCT-01 EA-06 SY-04 USSS-00 /082 W
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O R 131351Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4922

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 7228

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, IS

SUBJECT: TEL AVIV AND BEIRUT ATTACKS -- INSTANT REPRISALS OR
PRE-PLANNED ACTIONS?

REF: TEL AVIV 7172

SUMMARY: CROSSFIRE OF CLAIMS AND COUNTERCLAIMS RE
RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEL AVIV AND BEIRUT INCIDENTS AS DIRECTLY-
LINKED CHAIN OF REPRISALS SEEMS TO BE COMPONENT OF ARAB-
ISRAELI PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE. FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT, IT APPEARS
LIKELY THAT INCIDENTS WERE PLANNED WELL IN ADVANCE OF THEIR
ACTUAL OCCURRENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. HAARETZ DEC 13 REPORTS THAT OFFICIAL GOI SOURCES HAVE
CONCLUDED THAT GRENADE ATTACK AT TEL AVIV'S CHEN THEATRE
DEC 11 WAS NOT REPEAT NOT REPRISAL FOR PREVIOUS DAY'S
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ROCKET ATTACK ON PLO OFFICES IN BEIRUT. SOURCES NOTE THAT

TERRORIST LEFT BANGKOK ON TWA FLIGHT BOUND FOR ISRAEL SEVERAL HOURS BEFORE BEIRUT INCIDENT OCCURRED, AND DISCOUNT SPECULATION THAT ATTACK COULD HAVE BEEN PLANNED AT LAST MOMENT.

2. FOCUS OF ATTENTION IN ISRAEL ON DAY AFTER TEL AVIV ATTACK HAS BEEN ON QUESTION OF HOW TERRORIST WAS ABLE TO ENTER COUNTRY WITH EXPLOSIVE MATERIALS. ISRAEL PRESS HAS CARRIED ACCOUNT BY ISRAEL LAWYER WHO CHATTED WITH TERRORIST IN BANGKOK AIRPORT DEPARTURE LOUNGE PROVIDING ONE POSSIBLE EXPLANATION. TERRORIST HAD ARRIVED FROM SINGAPORE ON SINGAPORE AIRLINES FLIGHT 612 AND HAD CHECKED HIS LUGGAGE THROUGH TO TEL AVIV. ISRAELI SECURITY DOES NOT RE-EXAMINE LUGGAGE ON ALL AIRCRAFT UPON ARRIVAL AT BEN-GURION AIRPORT.

3. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT ISRAELI ATTACK ON SAIQA INSTALLATIONS ON BEIRUT OUTSKIRTS DEC 12 HAD BEEN TARGETTED FOR SOME TIME AS PART OF OVERALL PROGRAM FOR STRIKING TERRORIST BASES, AND THAT INFO MINISTER YARIV'S STATEMENT TO EIN GEDI YOUTH GROUP DEC 12 THAT BEIRUT RAID WAS REPRISAL FOR TEL AVIV INCIDENT WAS INCORRECT. PURPOSE WAS TO REASSURE ISRAELI PUBLIC OF GOI FIRMNESS IN COMBATTING TERRORISM.

4. COMMENT: CROSSFIRE OF ISRAELI, PLO AND PFLP STATEMENTS CLAIMING THAT THIS WEEK'S INCIDENTS HAVE BEEN RECIPROCAL REPRISAL ACTIONS IS CLEARLY ELEMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE IN WHICH EACH SIDE A) REASSURES ITS OWN PUBLIC AND B) THREATENS THE ENEMY. REALITY APPEARS TO BE MORE COMPLEX, WITH STRONG LIKELIHOOD THAT ALL ATTACKS INVOLVED CONSIDERABLE ADVANCE PREPARATION. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE, OF COURSE, THAT PLO OR PFLP HAD DECIDED TO PRE-POSITION TERRORIST(S) IN TEL AVIV FOR IMMEDIATE STRIKE IN RESPONSE TO ISRAELI ATTACK. BUT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO CONFIRM THIS.

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